



# Press Release

September 17, 2004

## **102 NEW AMERICANS TAKE THE OATH OF CITIZENSHIP ON ELLIS ISLAND** *President Bush Issues Proclamation to Commemorate Citizenship Day*

New York, N.Y. — Today Eduardo Aguirre, Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), administered the Oath of Allegiance to 102 new U.S. citizens, from 44 different countries around the world, on Ellis Island in New York City. In recognition of Citizenship Day, Ellis Island hosted this special naturalization ceremony for the nation's newest Americans. More than 20,000 new Americans will be sworn-in during special Citizenship Day ceremonies around the nation throughout this and next week. Each year, USCIS welcomes more than 450,000 citizens during naturalization ceremonies across the United States. That number includes more than 8,000 service members who have naturalized through an expedited process stemming from their involvement in the war on terrorism.

“Each year, the President issues a proclamation asking Americans, both native born and naturalized, to pause on September 17<sup>th</sup> and rededicate ourselves to our country and to the principles upon which it was founded,” said USCIS Director Eduardo Aguirre. “I can think of no more fitting way to do that than during a naturalization ceremony where we’ll weave our newest citizens into the American tapestry.”

The 102 new Americans, including two U.S. Army soldiers, are originally from the following 44 countries: Albania, Antigua, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Trinidad & Tobago, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

**(Media wishing to downlink video from the citizenship ceremony on Ellis Island may use the following coordinates: IA (formerly known as Telstar 6), transponder 24 C-Band; downlink frequency is 4180 Horizontal. The satellite feed will be available from 2:00 PM Eastern Time to 3:00 PM Eastern Time.)**

U.S. citizenship is the essential goal and process that ties every American together. From beginning to end, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is working to ensure that the naturalization and education process is meaningful to all citizens -- native born, naturalized and all immigrants who strive to become U.S. citizens. Throughout the entire process, USCIS promises to be there every step of the way. Over the past year, USCIS has launched a number of new initiatives to streamline USCIS customer service delivery such as Electronic Filing of immigration applications and online immigration case status checks, an online appointment system called InfoPass, a Backlog Elimination Plan, and expediting military naturalizations for all active duty military personnel.



## U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

**Beginning October 1, 2004, USCIS will be holding overseas military naturalizations at U.S. embassies. Since July 3, 2002, more than 18,000 military personnel have applied for U.S. citizenship. More than 8,000 have been sworn-in as new Americans to date.**

### Oath of Allegiance

*“I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation of purpose of evasion; so help me God.”*

**Naturalization Ceremony Locations** (Does not include all ceremonies. \* indicates a ceremony to be attended by Director Eduardo Aguirre.)

September 14, 2004

Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site, Buffalo, New York

September 15, 2004

United States District Court, Sacramento, California

September 16, 2004

L.A. Convention Center, Los Angeles, California

September 17, 2004

\*Ellis Island, New York City, New York ([read the Director's remarks here](#))

United States District Court, Phoenix, Arizona

Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, Arizona

Crest Theater, Sacramento, California

Scottish Rite Temple, San Diego, California

Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, Florida

Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

Namapa Civic Center, Boise, Idaho

Harold Washington Library, Chicago, Illinois

Maryland State House, Annapolis, Maryland

City Council Chambers, Flint, Michigan

United States District Court, Las Vegas, Nevada

United States District Court, Reno, Nevada

The Hermitage, Nashville, Tennessee

Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, Texas

Slavic Evangelical Church, Vancouver, Washington

September 20, 2004

Fresno Convention Center, Fresno, California

September 25, 2004

Mount Rushmore, Rapid City, South Dakota